

Can It Be Done?

After nearly 26 years of trying to encourage people to help change the Profit System to the Priceless System, I have just about given up.

This, I think, is the wrong approach. With this approach people just sit back and wait for the government or somebody else to make it happen. So therefore it doesn't happen. They write to me saying how glad they are that I'm working on it, but they don't offer to help!

I do have power over my own life, because I have chosen to take that power. I can't force other people to change. I have made myself almost free of the wage-slave system. "When you take pay, you must obey." I encourage others to take their own Freedom, if they desire more happiness and less stress. It can be done. I did it 26 years ago and others write to me saying they have done so too or are devising ways to edge out of the Rat Race.

Dale Speirs, editor of Opuntia, Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2P 2E7 (\$3. for sample copy), wrote in his issue #23.5 of his interesting experiment with discontinuing his habit of absorbing the mass media. This is a very important step in relieving the stress and tension in ones life. You may be very surprised to learn that you don't miss all that fear-mongering bullshit one bit! It also gives us more time to lead our own thinking into self-beneficial lines of thought. When we are not listening, reading or watching the propaganda, we then have a chance to design a path to Freedom for our self.

The whole world may tag along after us, as they become aware of the possibility. Or as in the Hundredth Monkey story, our idea may reach a saturation point and then everyone will jump on the band-wagon. In the meantime some of us are enjoying some of the fruits of Freedom -- that we caused to happen from our own efforts. We don't have to live in a community to get started. If we have a mate and/or kids we work with them to create some Freedom

for our little group. If we are alone it is even easier.

Those who don't put out the effort to take their Freedom, will remain shackled to their TV, newspapers and their wage-slavery. And rightly so! We can't do it for them, they must do it for themselves.

Be Meek?

The meek and humble will not inherit the Earth. The law of the survival of the fittest is still operating. The meek and humble will only inherit their little niche in slavery. The Shepherd says, "Be good sheep and believe and obey. Give Caesar his taxes and give me your blind faith."

Maybe the world will always have some slaves, if some people refuse to think for themselves. They have every right to be slaves if that is their desire. There may always be people who will be happy to be their slave-masters, I don't know. Some people may look at it as; taking-care-of the retarded. Yes! We are either children or retards when we allow others to control us. I was too. That part of our education -- about wage-slavery -- was kept a secret from us. They retarded our maturation by making us believe that we had Freedom. They never came right out and said, "When you take pay, you must obey." did they? No, we knew we had to obey the boss, but we thought that was a normal part of Freedom. How retarded we were. Most people still are. Believe me! I've had 26 years of nearly total Freedom to speak from.

Informers?

Is it our job to inform people of this? Hell no! But look how some of us have got ourselves caught up in this fucking thankless pursuit. Are we doing it out of love for our fellow humans? Or from a desire to see and live in a free and happier world? Are we afraid to go-for the whole thing? Maybe we do it from a stupid slave-mentality learned from taking care of the masters. Maybe we extended that, after we achieved some degree of Freedom, into taking care of the slaves. Shit! Why not take care of ourself?

Whatever it is, I surely hope I can free myself from it and just

enjoy creating even more Freedom for myself. I have only X more years to live, why not live them to the fullest?

Pissed-off

I really got pissed-off the other day. A long time LFP reader wrote and was complaining and criticizing me for not organizing and protesting and for not doing anything to take care of the poor and the imprisoned. She has been getting the LFP off and on for at least ten years. I once met her and she seemed like a normal 40 year old working person. She even knew how to save money. I respected her for that. But now it sounds like she is pissed because I haven't created Freedom for her. Over the years she never mentioned once that she was trying any of my suggestions to gain her own Freedom nor reprinting my papers to encourage others.

Is this the way people are? Are they just sitting before their TV's relaxing with their beers, cocktails or drugs waiting for Godot to fetch for them? Is this the kind of people I should help and feel sorry for?

Sometimes I have felt like joining the slave-masters in tending the flock and shearing the sheep. But I'm too old for that. I think I would be much better off in just learning how to play and enjoy life more in my remaining years. Will I ever talk myself into it??? To be a slave-master requires a certain kind of effort in tending ones income and ones slaves, that I really don't wish to exert.

I wonder if the slave-masters look upon us, like a farmer looks at his livestock, as dumb animals that he must take care of and exploit? Perhaps the slave-master is a good guy after all and is just taking care of us dumb sheep. He may even be happy that some of us are evolving enough to look after ourselves and relieve him of a little of his burden.

Meet People

I've found a great deal of happiness, contentment and satisfaction in doing things and going places that cost me very little money. And in doing these nearly free things, I meet people who

have already discovered the same secrets and they is good people.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Ernest,

I have been reading the Little Free Press since I read an article about you in the Christian Science Monitor (the only paper I read or trust) about eight years ago. Over the years, your PES has made more and more sense to me. When I first got out of college 18 years ago, all I wanted to do was make lots of money!! But I found that the more I made, the less happy I was.

So a few months ago, I dropped out!! After 20 years as a Purchasing Manager in the electronics business, I quit my job (paying \$55,000 per year) and joined a buddy of mine in his long-haul trucking business. I got tired of working for rich guys who never appreciated my efforts, even though I helped them make tons of money. You know the kind of guys I'm talking about. No matter how many hours I worked, it was never long enough; no matter how much money I saved them, it was never enough; no matter how good of a job I did for him, every time I was up for salary review, he always told me I was no good. "When you take pay -- you must obey." -- it sure is true!

Fortunately, my wife (who quit her computer programming job five years ago to be a full-time mom to our two young children) was totally supportive. Both she and I have been actually scaling down our lives over the past eight years. Now our family lives on about \$400 per week. I'm having the time of my life driving all over the country and when I'm home, I get to spend full days with my children instead of just in the evenings like I used to. I feel I have made the first important step towards PES by "dropping out" of the work-for-money life I was in before. Now I work to enjoy life and don't worry about money anymore. And you know what? I'm much happier, have no stress, and we always seem to have the money we need. It's amazing how little money you can live on when you want to.

You have influenced my life over the past several years in a very positive way and I just wanted to say thank you!

A man from CA

Hello!

I just wanted to thank you for LFP, I've just now finished reading the three issues you sent me (113-115), and have truly enjoyed them; though I don't really agree with all of the political statements you made (I think perhaps you're a little too inclined towards Taloula Rasa, and like my anarchist friends, have a little too much faith in the giving nature of humans), I do like the way you think! Actually, my favorite parts were your stories! And having grow up on the coasts of Texas and North Carolina, I sense you, too, have not just a sea gypsy in you, but beyond that, a sheer emotional affection for the water - perhaps you could join us sailing some time (my drummer's parents have a boat we occasionally take out in summer). I also appreciate your emphasis on self-determination, but have mixed feelings about the idea of playing the profit game so you don't have to play the profit game; on one hand, it makes perfect sense to me (I'm doing it right now); on the other hand, it just seems so damn untenable as a philosophical construct, like having a war to end war . . . is it really fighting fire with fire, or is it just rationalization? Does it matter?

Hey, I dunno, but here's a mess of stamps, I hope you'll help me figure it out!

(A person from NC.)

Editor's response:

Thanks for your interesting and thought provoking letter.

Many people have criticized me for using money to change the system. Welcome to the club.

Perhaps you people are right. If I think the money system is wrong, perhaps I should totally quit using it. I may just do that. But then of course I won't have money to print a newsletter and not have the money for stamps to send it out. Not many of my stamps are paid for by my readers. So then how will people find out about the ways I (and others) are getting our selves free FREE of the Rat Race? They will have to re-invent the wheel. Is that how you want it?

I must admit I got a lot of my Freedom ideas from books and newsletters other excapees paid money to publish or got paid for writing. But you may be right and I may just quit publishing. Now does that seem pure enough for you?

Your criticism may just be the additional straw that finally broke this old camel's back, or made him see the light!

I do not intend to write stories about my adventures just to entertain people even if they paid me. Many of my readers seem to think that this is the best part of my work. Well, you can all find much better written and more exciting stories in your public library, free of charge and no postage to pay. The libraries won't handle my work because it has too much truth in it, which you don't seem to agree with. Well, so be it.

Fire to Fight Fire?

Here is another thought on this subject of my using money to fight money. Are people who use this argument like some anti-religious arguers who ask, "Can God, who is all powerful, create a stone so huge that he can not lift it?" Is this just some kind of mind-fucking?

I could probably go far away and hide in a forest, jungle or on the water and survive like the primitives did if I studied sufficiently for it. But then I would be no help in making change, would I?

Work Hard!

We have been taught to work hard and save our money so that some day we can retire and take it easy, living off our savings. Pensions are savings we put aside as we worked. It was to be given back to us when we retired. (We didn't count on the government and other pension fund guardians being poor investors and even embezzlers.)

Well, some of us worked harder and invested better and were able to retire at a younger age. I managed it at age 42, back in 1969. Can anyone tell me what is wrong about using my hard earned savings to pay for printing and the other costs of publishing ideas for a better system, where we would have no need for money, credit or barter? It is my money. I can spend it as I damned well please. Right?

Fight fire with fire? Fight the money system with money? Some people seem to think that it is not fair to do this. Just exactly what else is there to fight it with? How about prayer? But no, you must use money to live or you will die and not be able to pray. And you are supposed to leave money in the church too.

All I can say is that I use the Priceless Economic System all that I can to fight the Profit System. The PES is where you work for free and get all products and services for free. Right? So I give my work, the Little Free Press newsletter, free of charge. (I let people pay the postage for its delivery.) If you think that the LFP newsletter is not work, then you just try to write one. It usually takes me several days to get one written and then re-written at least ten times to get it as good as I'm able. Then I take it to the printer and come back and pay for it and take it home. Then a trip to the PO to buy stamps. Then buy envelopes. Then the monotonous grunt work starts; folding, collating, stuffing, sealing, affixing postage, applying a return address, making the address labels, peeling them off and affixing them to the envelopes, then hauling them to the PO and then taking care of the endless correspondence that follows. Most people get paid to do this kind of work. Someone asked me what I do with all my time. Ha!

I make no income, profit or wages from this newsletter or my books. In fact it cost me a considerable amount of money to publish. But I do it, and have done it for 26 years, because I believe in the PES idea and think that its time has come and that someone must do it.

So I'm doing half of the PES. I work for free. It is true I must pay for nearly everything that I want. But I do get lots of things I need free of charge from dumpsters and many things almost for free at yard and garage sales. This exploring for free stuff and bargains is lots of fun in itself, like treasure hunting.

Now if that is not the politically correct way, then I certainly don't know what is. Perhaps you can tell me the correct way to make change from our insane profit system to a sane system. Please don't tell me to ask the politicians to do it, nor any government departments. And please don't ask me to just wait for the system to collapse and that it will change its own diapers after that.

Another Way to Think

One doesn't need to fight fair against slavery. Slavery is not fair. A slave escapes any way he/she can. Slavery is not a natural state

in nature. You don't just go up and ask the slave-master to set you free. Try it, but you already know his answer, "Obey or you're fired!" and then how will you pay your bills and mortgage or rent? How will you get food?

Slave-masters are bullies. They bully weaker dumber people into working for them. Just like the farmer does his horses.

In the olden days a bully would send his slaves across the border, under the direction of his head whipping-boy (a general), to try to capture more land and more slaves from another bully. When they brought new slaves home, the head bully told them that if they were good slaves and worked hard for ten years or so he would set them free. He told them that after that they would become wage-slaves instead of Slaves. The new slaves fell for it; hook, line and sinker. However a few who had a few brains and guts, escaped in any way they could. They didn't stop and ask themselves, "Is my escape tenable as a philosophical construct?" No. They knew that slavery was an untenable philosophical construct, so they got the Hell out of it as soon as they made a chance for themselves. Right?

You A Slave?

You work for pay today, you got to obey, or you get fired, right? A slave has to obey, so when you work for pay you are a slave -- like it or not! Only they use euphemisms now: Boss or employer for slave-master, employee for slave and Profit/Wage System for Slave System. What's the difference?

There are no rules for escaping from slavery, except for the ones the slave-master makes. He/she says pay-up your indentures (mortgage/credit card, etc.) and then you are free to be wage-slaves. Slave-masters are really **crafty bastards!**

Well, some slaves are shedding part of their shackles by saying, "Take-back all this overpriced furniture, cars, houses and junk that I'm indebted for. I'll find something old and used that I can pay cash for and find my way to Freedom much faster. Your junk is not worth the hours (years) of my life needed to pay for it."

Now, this may not seem like a tenable philosophical construct, but by God it works! A bad credit record is an asset. It keeps one from charging deeper into inden-

tured slavery. When dealing with these bullies, one may need to kick, bite, scratch and sneak to escape from their slavery.

We don't have to give anyone the right to bully us!!! Some of us are finding ways to get around this bully system (Profit/Wage System).

Skinny?

I just seen an ad for Barbie dolls in our free weekly Walmart ad paper. Are these dolls indoctrinating little girls to think that they should have very very long and very skinny legs? The leg length looks way out of proportion to the body. Is that a role model that is unachievable? Is this role model saying that it is right to be malnourished and as a result, sickly? And is it infering that there is something wrong with girls with shorter legs? How will this idea make little girls feel?

Say, is the Walmart Corporation like the Rockefeller Corporation that goes in an area with cheaper prices and drives all its competitors out of business and then raises its prices higher than ever?

Corporations are legal entities. They are not human. They have no conscience. They are mainly concerned with their bottom line. What better way to create more Profit than creating a monopoly situation?

Sure is fun though, to go into Walmarts and see the huge volume of stuff and get a bargain now and then and have a kindly-smiling-harmless-old gent or lady say "Hello!" to you on entering and try to push a cart on you.

After they bankrupt their competitors in your area and raise their prices and try to lower their wages, do you suppose an armed guard will replace the reception committee? *Just wait and see!*

Zine Review

RIPENING SEASONS, 6545 Ravenna Ave., N.E. #307 Seattle, WA 98115 (206-528-6122) (by donation) by Irv Thomas. Remember Irv wrote a book about his travels through Europe, on less than \$100 per week, a couple of years ago. Years ago Irv put out the paper called, Black Bart Brigade (a paper for middle-aged outlaws). Here's something from his current paper:

Peace Pilgrim

By Irv Thomas

I'm sure all of you know who Peace Pilgrim was . . . the woman who spent the last 28 years of her life criss-crossing the country on foot in the cause of Peace (she

died in 1981 at the age of 73!). It was an utterly remarkable demonstration of faith and Providence, for she carried no money or gear and accepted no transportation. People along the way supplied her with all her other needs.

But you may not know about a small volunteer organization called Friends of Peace Pilgrim, dedicated to disseminating material on her life and work, which includes a 224-page book, along with newsletters and pamphlets. They are located at 43480 Cedar Ave., Hemet, CA 92544 (909-927-7678), and all of their material is free (though donations certainly help with the work they do).

I'm going to close this issue with a quoted passage from Steps Toward Inner Peace, one of their booklets. These are Peace Pilgrim's own words:

"So I got busy on a very interesting project. This was *to live all the good things I believed in*. I did not confuse myself by trying to take them all at once, but rather, if I was doing something that I knew I should not be doing, I stopped doing it, and I always made a *quick relinquishment*. You see, that's the easy way. Tapering off is long and hard. And if I was not doing something that I knew I should be doing, I got busy on that. It took the living quite a while to catch up with the believing, but of course it can, and now if I believe something, I live it. Otherwise it would be perfectly meaningless. As I lived according to the highest light that I had, I discovered that other light was given, and that I opened myself to receiving more light as I lived the light I had.

"There are those who know and do not do. This is very sad. I remember one day as I walked along the highway a very nice car stopped and the man said to me 'How wonderful that you are following your calling!' . . . He then began telling me what he felt motivated toward and it was a good thing that needed doing. I got quite enthusiastic about it and took for granted that he was doing it. I said 'That's wonderful! How are you getting on with it?' And he answered, 'Oh, I'm not doing it. That kind of work doesn't *pay* anything.' And I shall never forget how desperately unhappy that man was. But you see, in this materialistic age we have such a false criterion by which to measure suc-

cess. We measure it in terms of dollars, in terms of material things. But happiness and inner peace do not lie in that direction. If you know but do not do, you are a very unhappy person indeed."

Some years ago I read her book and some of her pamphlets that someone sent me. It was very worthwhile and inspiring reading. Not enough religion in it to spoil the wisdom she was sharing. Thank God!

This little reminder of her focus, may be just what I need at this time.

My Life

I've been working like a dog on this mobile home; repairing broken water pipes, broken sewer fittings, replacing faucets and fixing the furnace. I've been riding my ten-speed bike exploring dumpsters and garage sales to get all those little things one seems to need to run a home. I've been buying supplies for different repair jobs yet ahead me. I've waited two months for the anchor tie-down man to do his job. That cost me \$180.

I had about \$2,000 in savings before I bought this mobile home. Now it's all gone, but now I have a home that is all paid for, that will soon be finished enough to sell and get my money back, plus some Profit.

Now that may blow your mind! *Me* making a Profit! But I've explained before, that I have had a need to get one foot back into the Rat Race for a while and build up a reserve of money. That was how I escaped in 1969 . . . I had built up a reserve.

I don't feel insecure though, as I have my Social Security Retirement Pension and my Vet's Pension that amount to \$670/mo. I also now have two small contract for deeds that pay me monthly payments, so I'll be saving part of that to build up another reserve. Even a dumb squirle knows it must have a little reserve stash of nuts on hand.

We have had marvelous weather. Could have used an air conditioner about two weeks this year. Instead, I put aluminum foil in the widows facing the sun and stripped down to short pants. I'm OK. I just don't think about the temperature on those days.

Now I'm almost half done putting skirting around the bottom of my trailer. This is a re-invent

the wheel job, as I've never done it before. I'm slowly learning a few little tricks-of-the-trade. (Because I learned a few skills in my life, I'm able to put them to use for myself, now and then, to make a little money or to save myself some money.) The trailer is looking nice. It is comfortable and homey after living in my car for four months.

And all this while trying to write and take care of my correspondence. What do I do with my spare time? I do my own cooking, housekeeping and read a little.

Books

My two books are available from:

Marathon International Book Co.
Box 32

Madison, IN 47250-0032

A New Book?

My third book is all typeset and ready to go to a printer. It will contain the best parts of all my newsletters since FREE I GOT was published. My book distributor had planned to publish it. I don't have the money nor the inclination to do so and I'm not sure my distributor has either the money or the time. So it may not get published. If people think my writings should not survive, they won't. That is certainly their prerogative. Maybe I have been just spinning my wheels. But no, by my writings, I have at least taught myself how to get free. Well, so be it.

Back Issues of LFP

Back issues are available from:

Dryan

Box 640

Elk River, MN 55330

Send him a stamp for an LFP back-issue catalog-sheet that has a review of each issue and prices.

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